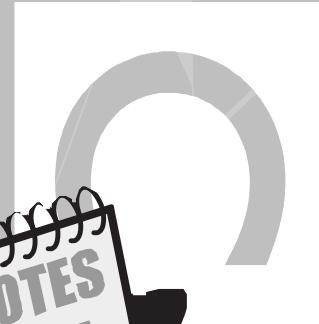


LEARNING english



**LEARNING GUIDE
BUILD YOUR VOCABULARY,
MAKE USEFUL PHRASES,
CORRECT YOUR OWN ERRORS, AND MORE.**

Welcome

Welcome to the BBC World Service **Learning Guide**. This booklet is full of tips to help you improve your English and exercises to help you practise what you've learnt.

How to use the Learning Guide

The Learning Guide is divided into eight sections.

1. **How to build your vocabulary**
2. **How to make useful phrases**
3. **How to use past tenses correctly**
4. **How to use future forms correctly**
5. **How to choose the correct preposition**
6. **How to use phrasal verbs**
7. **How to compare and contrast things**
8. **How to correct your own errors**

In each section you will find ...

- **an example of the language point being discussed.**
- **an explanation of the language point.**
- **a short exercise to encourage you to think about the patterns of the language.***
- **a learning tip to help make your learning more effective.**
- **follow-up tasks to help you practise the language of the section.**

* It is important to remember when you are learning English that there are very few 'rules' which are true in all situations. Instead, we can identify 'patterns' which may be true most of the time.
At the back of the booklet, you will find guidelines on these patterns for each section as well as answers to the exercises.



I. How to build your vocabulary

How can I learn new words? It seems **impossible** – there are so many. I want a **manageable** system to help me build my vocabulary – nothing **unrealistic** or **trendy**, simply a few tips to help me learn easily.

Word attack skills

The easiest way to extend your vocabulary is to improve your **word attack skills**. In English, we often use prefixes (letters added to the beginning of a word) and suffixes (letters added to the end of a word) to change or add to the word's meaning. In this way, we create a **word family**.

Word attack skills involve looking for the stem (or root) of the word – the part which never changes – then working out how the prefix or suffix has changed the meaning.

Prefixes

These often give a word a negative or opposite meaning. Look at the adjectives below.

impossible illegal untidy incomplete imprecise illiterate
unreal irrational immovable irrelevant

Can you notice a pattern in how we use these prefixes?

Suffixes

Different suffixes can give words different meanings. Look at the passage below. Can you identify what the suffixes **-able**, **-y** and **-ish** mean? What type of word do we add each suffix to – noun, verb or adjective?

I love listening to BBC World Service. The programmes are usually shortish – between 15 and 30 minutes, and always understandable. The news is very reliable and the music programmes are good for trendy, youngish people. It's always easy to find something to listen to because World Service broadcasts on so many frequencies.

 **Learning tip** When learning a new word, always try to identify any prefixes or suffixes. This will help you focus on the word stem. If you are using a dictionary to help you, always take a note of the prefixes and suffixes listed in the dictionary entry. They are often divided from the word stem by a hyphen (e.g. im-possible).

Learning tasks

1. Link the words below to the appropriate prefix: **im-**, **il-**, **ir-**, **un-**, **in-**

convenient legible replaceable known passable

Complete the following sentence with one of the words with its prefix from exercise 1.

- a) My brother's handwriting is terrible. It's so _____ that his teacher refused to mark his English composition!
- b) Many mountain roads are_____ in winter because they are blocked by snow.
- c) Anna was very upset when she lost her necklace because she will never find another one like it. It is_____.
- d) 'Is this an_____ time to call you?' 'Not at all. I'm not busy at the moment.'
- e) This poem was written by an_____ poet. I wish I knew who he was!

2. Add a suffix to the words in brackets below to complete the sentences. Choose **-y**, **-ish** or **-able**.

- a) The weather in London is very (rain) in winter so the streets are often wet.
- b) I love food which is hot and (spice).
- c) I bought my radio six months ago, so it is (new).
- d) It was sunny this morning, but then it went (cloud) and now it's raining!

2. How to make useful phrases

I like to **make the most** of the programmes I hear on the radio. Whenever I switch on BBC World Service, I have a pen and paper so I can **take notes** and remember the new words I hear. Last year, I used the notes to study when I **had English exams** – they were really useful!

Recognising collocations

There are many groups of words – or phrases – in English which seem to have no rules about how they are formed. Certain words – for example adjectives and nouns, or verbs and nouns, simply ‘go together’.

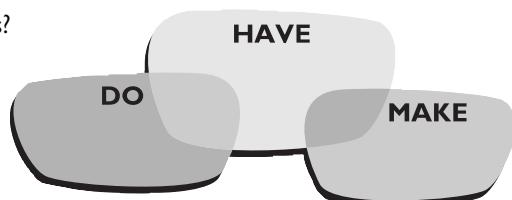
These groups of words are called collocations and by learning to recognise and use collocations you can make your English much richer.

Verb and noun collocations

Do we use **do**, **have** or **make** with the following nouns? Put the words below into the correct circle but remember, some of these nouns can take two different verbs.

your homework	an examination	the housework	dinner	a walk
some exercise	your bed	a mess	trouble	the washing-up
some tea	a bath	a test	a decision	the cleaning

Can you see a useful ‘pattern’ to help you remember these collocations?



Adjective & noun collocations

In this passage, underline all of the adjectives associated with food.

I went on holiday last week and I forgot to clean my fridge. When I got home, the milk had gone sour and the eggs were rotten. I also found some week-old bread which was stale, of course. And the fish... Everything had gone off.

What do these adjectives have in common?



Learning tip: When you are learning new vocabulary, always check to see if the words you are learning ‘go with’ – or **collocate with** – other words. Try to identify patterns in collocations to help you remember phrases rather than single words. To do this, group vocabulary by subject, or by nouns which share the same adjective. For example, we know that someone who smokes a lot is a **heavy smoker** but did you know that we can also have **heavy drinkers**?

Learning tasks

1. Complete the dialogues below with **do**, **have**, or **make**.

- a) ‘Have you _____ dinner yet?’ ‘No. What would you like to eat?’
b) ‘Have you _____ the washing up?’ ‘Not yet.’
c) ‘Would you like to go to the cinema this evening?’ ‘I can’t. I _____ an exam tomorrow.’
d) ‘Can you _____ this exercise?’ ‘Yes, but it’s a bit difficult!’

Weather collocations

2. Complete the text using the adjectives below. Some adjectives can be used more than once.

thick light heavy

This evening, we will have a) _____ rain in the east, but only b) _____ showers in the south and west. Tomorrow morning will start with c) _____ cloud everywhere, except in the north where it will be sunny. Expect d) _____ snow over the weekend and e) _____ fog at the coast.

3. How to use past tenses correctly

One day, I **was listening** to the radio when I **heard** a letter being read out. It was from a penfriend of mine and she **had written in** to the BBC to ask a question about English grammar. I **was** so surprised! That's what I like about the World Service – it brings people closer together through learning English.

Using past tenses

When we talk about the past – for example, when we are telling anecdotes or stories – we use a collection of tenses known as **narrative tenses**. In this group, we find the **past simple tense**, the **past continuous (or progressive) tense**, and the **past perfect**. In order to use them accurately, we must recognise the function of each tense within the story or *narrative*.

Identifying tenses

Read the passage below and identify the tense of each.

It was raining (a) heavily when Jim arrived (b) home. He had been working (c) late and had missed (d) the last bus. Exhausted, he decided (e) to call a taxi to take him home. He waited (f) and waited but the taxi never arrived (g). So he decided (h) to walk. It was a dark evening but the street lamps were shining (i) brightly. He began (j) the long walk home.

Which tense(s) ...

- a) is used to give the main events of the story?
- b) is used to describe the background details but not the important actions?
- c) are used to give information about actions which happened before the main events of the story took place?

Learning tip Take care not to overuse the past perfect tenses. These are used to emphasise that an action took place before the main events of a story. The past continuous tense can give lots of background detail – like the background in a picture – whilst the past simple tells the story, like the foreground of a picture.

Learning task

Put the following sentences in the correct order to make a story. The first one has been done for you.

The story begins:

It was a stormy afternoon. c)...

- a) 'Are you OK?' she whispered.
- b) The phone rang and rang but nobody answered it.
- c) The thunder was crashing and the wind was howling through the trees.
- d) When he woke up, he was in hospital and his wife was standing beside his bed.
- e) When he arrived at the station, he phoned his wife to ask her to meet him there.
- f) He turned around but couldn't see anybody. Suddenly, he heard a voice.
- g) Professor Brown groaned, then fell to the ground.
- h) He decided to walk home in the rain.
- i) Professor Brown finished work at five o'clock and took the 5.30 train home.
- j) The man took his briefcase, then hit Professor Brown very hard on the head.
- k) While he was walking through the park, he thought he heard a scream.
- l) Professor Brown was worried. His wife was usually home by 5.30.
- m) A man snarled, 'Hello Professor Brown. We have your wife. Give me your briefcase or you will never see her again.'
- n) It sounded familiar. He was sure he had heard the voice before.
- o) 'I'm fine,' he said, 'but the men who have my briefcase aren't. All there is inside is... .'

What do **YOU** think was inside the briefcase?

4. How to use future forms correctly

I'd like to have a job which involves using English. I'm **going** to university next year to study English, and after that I **might** try to get a job in a company which works with people abroad. In the meantime, I'll continue to listen to BBC World Service to improve my listening skills.

The forms of 'the future'

We use many different forms to talk about the future in English. Surprisingly, the word 'will' is not used as often as you might think when you talk about future plans and intentions – and the word 'shall' is almost never heard in this context.

Talking about future plans

Read the passage below and try to answer these questions:

When and why do we use **the present continuous (be + -ing)**?

When and why do we use **be + going to + infinitive**?

When and why do we use **might**?

I'm going to have a really good weekend this weekend. First of all, I'm going to finish reading a wonderful book which I started last week – I really can't wait to get to the end of the story. Then, on Saturday, I'm meeting an old friend and we're going to a new art exhibition. I don't know about Sunday yet. I might go to the cinema but I'm not sure what's on. But, in the evening, I'm definitely going to listen to BBC World Service!



Learning tip Using **will** a lot in spoken English can make you sound over-formal. When speaking with friends about plans for the future – whether it's very soon or not – we more often use **be + going to + infinitive**.

Learning task

Complete the task below the verb in the correct future form. Use **present continuous**, **be + going to + infinitive** or **might + infinitive**.

1. What _____ (you / do) this evening?
I don't know. I _____ (go) to the cinema.
2. What time _____ (you / leave) for the airport this evening?
About six o'clock. I _____ (meet) Jim there at 7.00.
3. I _____ (make) dinner soon. What would you like to eat?
4. _____ (you / listen) to the radio this evening?
5. Anna _____ (come) for dinner tomorrow so I _____ (cook) something special.



5. How to choose the correct preposition

I always listen **to** the radio **in** the evening before going **to** bed. I'm very interested **in** world affairs and love to hear **about** the way people live **in** other countries.

Choosing prepositions

Prepositions are the small words which you often hear between verbs and nouns. Prepositions are used to show the physical relationship between objects, or actions and objects. So, for example, we have prepositions of place and movement.

- place** e.g. The radio's **on** the table **under** the window.
movement e.g. Go **to** the shops. / Go **through** the park.

However, there are two groups of words – time phrases and certain verbs and adjectives – which **collocate** with specific prepositions in a different way. This section will help you with these two groups.

Time phrases

Look at the following groups of time phrases. Match each group with the appropriate preposition.

A. <i>the evening</i>	B. <i>six o'clock</i>	C. <i>Tuesday</i>	D. <i>last year</i>
<i>1984</i>	<i>New Year</i>	<i>16th March</i>	<i>yesterday</i>
<i>the 18th Century</i>	<i>5.40</i>	<i>Monday 1st May</i>	<i>next week</i>
<i>winter</i>	<i>night</i>	<i>Friday morning</i>	<i>two days ago</i>
<i>the morning</i>	<i>Christmas</i>	<i>April 21st</i>	
<i>the 1980s</i>			
<i>March</i>			

at / on / no preposition / in

Can you identify a pattern for the use of each preposition?

Dependent prepositions

Try to fill the gaps below with the appropriate preposition.

I enjoy studying and depend a) _____ BBC World Service for English language programmes. I'm very interested b) _____ new technology and enjoy hearing c) _____ scientific developments around the world. Also, listening d) _____ the radio helps improve my English. At the moment, I'm concentrating e) _____ improving my grammar so that I can speak with fewer errors.



Learning tip As with many points of English grammar there are no constant rules which can help you learn which preposition to use. However, you can help your learning if you ...

- make sure, when you are looking up a word in a dictionary, that you note which preposition follows it.
- group words according to the preposition they use. This can help you identify patterns which make remembering the correct prepositions easier.

Learning task

Answer the following questions in complete sentences, using the correct preposition.

e.g. When were you born? / I was born **on** ...

- When is New Year's Day?
- When is the weather hottest?
- When do people in Britain have decorated trees in their houses?
- When did William Shakespeare live?
- When did you last listen to BBC World Service?
- What time is your favourite programme on?

6. How to use phrasal verbs

I find listening to the radio helps me **pick up** new vocabulary really easily. When the programme is finished I **look up** any words I can remember just to make sure I understand them – then I **try them out** on my friends to see if they can understand them.

Using phrasal verbs

A phrasal verb (or multi-word verb) is a combination of a verb and one or two prepositions which, when they go together, create a new meaning for the verb. They are a common feature of everyday speech and, unfortunately, can be difficult to learn because a) there are so many and b) some phrasal verbs have more than one meaning. However, there are strategies which can help you.

Identifying phrasal verbs

Look at the following sentences. Remember the definition of *phrasal verb* above. Which of these sentences contains a phrasal verb?

- a) **It was a lovely night. We looked up at the beautiful moonlit sky.**
- b) **John looked up when he heard his father come in.**
- c) **When I find a word I don't know I look it up in my dictionary.**

Can you think of another way of explaining the meaning of the phrasal verb 'look up'?

Working out the meaning of phrasal verbs

As with all new vocabulary, you can often deduce the meaning of a phrasal verb by looking at the context in which it is used. Try to replace the phrasal verbs in the passage with a verb from the list which has a similar meaning.

My alarm clock went off at five o'clock. I got up and put on my clothes. After a quick breakfast, I set off for work. It was going to be a long day!

arose rang suddenly and loudly dressed began a journey

Try to read the passage with these verbs replacing the phrasal verbs. What difference do these verbs make to the tone of the passage?



Learning tip When learning phrasal verbs, try to learn groups which can go together to make a story. Learning lists of verbs which take the preposition 'up' or all of the prepositions which the verb 'put' can take can be effective as a revision exercise, but this may not help you remember the meaning. Creating a story using five or six phrasal verbs will help make the meaning more memorable.

Learning task

The following phrasal verbs are all connected with learning English. Match the halves of the sentences together.

1. When I'm listening to the radio, I listen	a) it out in conversation.
2. I also pick	b) over the vocabulary and grammar I've learnt.
3. Every evening, I go	c) out for new words and expressions.
4. When I've learnt a new word I try	d) up new words from listening to music.
5. I always try to work	e) on well in English.
6. I'm really getting	f) out the meaning of new words from the context they are in.

Now match the phrasal verbs above with the more formal verbs or phrases which mean the same (below).

- a) **pay attention**
- b) **review**
- c) **learn without studying**
- d) **deduce**
- e) **experiment with**
- f) **make progress**

7. How to compare and contrast things

Sometimes I find studying grammar difficult. It's **not as hard as** speaking English, but I really find reading and learning vocabulary **easier**. I think I could be **more efficient** in the way I study. For example, I could set aside an hour a night to go over what I've been learning. But, if I do this in the evening I know it will be **less effective** because I'm tired.

Comparing and contrasting

When making comparisons in English, there are a few patterns which can help make what you describe more interesting. You may have learnt that, to make a comparison between two things, you should use the formula **adjective + -er + than**. However, this is only one way of showing the differences between two things or two ideas.

More or less?

Look at the passage at the top of the page. Complete the following sentences using the information from the passage.

Reading is easier than...

Studying early in the day is more effective than...

I could be more efficient than...

Complete the following 'rules' for making comparative adjectives:

- a) **Adjectives with one syllable (e.g. tall)...**
- b) **Adjectives with three or more syllables (e.g. efficient)...**
- c) **Adjectives preceded by 'less'...**
- d) **What happens to adjectives with two syllables (e.g. pretty, lovely)?**

(Not) as ... as ...

Reading is not as difficult as speaking.

- a) Which is easier – reading or speaking?

My vocabulary is as good as my grammar.

- b) Which is better – my vocabulary or my grammar?



Learning tip The 'formulas' for making comparisons given in the guidelines are easy to follow. But remember that some adjectives are **irregular**. Two good examples are the adjectives **good** and **bad**.

good	better	best
bad	worse	worst

Keep a separate section in your vocabulary book for noting down irregular comparative adjectives. Also, remember that three-letter adjectives usually double the last letter when they make a comparative,

e.g. **hot / hotter, wet / wetter, big / bigger**

Learning task

Some of the sentences below have errors in them and some are correct. Find and correct the errors.

1. In winter, London is colder as Paris.
2. I don't speak English as well than I write it.
3. Learning English alone is interesting but learning English by radio is more good.
4. It is better to listen to the radio in the evenings. The signal is clearer then.
5. Studying grammar is less difficult than learning vocabulary.
6. I'd like to visit Britain, but it is more expensive to travel there.
7. This exercise isn't difficult as it seemed at the beginning.
8. My family enjoys listening to BBC World Service. It's funner than our local radio stations.

8. How to correct your own errors

I know I make mistakes and this makes me very upset. I would like to speak English without errors but this will take a very long time. I feel that I am not making progress.

Working with errors

The most important thing to realise about the mistakes which you make is that they are usually a sign of progress. Often, errors are a result of our trying to say something before we have learnt the necessary grammar or vocabulary. This 'risk taking' is a good way of learning because it makes us experiment with the language.

To learn from your mistakes, it is important to reflect on the error and what you know about English. You can then try to correct yourself.

Reflecting on errors

Each of the following sentences contains an error related to some of the work you have done in this booklet. Try to correct the errors.

1. My friend Jane is flying to Madrid at Saturday.
2. She might to visit the Prado art gallery when she is there.
3. She is interested by Spanish art and culture.
4. She also loves the weather there – there is no thick rain!
5. She had been to France last year.
6. She didn't like the owners of her hotel there – they were very unpolite!
7. Next year, she goes to South America!



Learning tip *The most important thing to do when you are speaking is not to worry about making mistakes! Try to focus on what you want to say, not how you are saying it. Listeners are generally very tolerant of grammatical errors as long as your message is clear.*

To help yourself learn from your mistakes, remember to ...

- *proof read anything you write carefully. Check any written work twice – once to 'hear' how it sounds – can you improve the vocabulary you use? And a second time to check for grammatical errors.*
- *if you have a cassette recorder, you might like to have a conversation with a friend in English. Record your conversation, then listen. How could you improve what you said?*

Learning task

There are nine errors in this paragraph. Find and correct them.

I find studying English very enjoying. At first, when I was began to learn, I have made many mistakes and I was scared to speaking in English. Now, however, it's a lot of fun. I listen the radio every day and I do a note of some of the new words which I hear. Then I look them in my dictionary and try to use them the next day. In general, I find reading and grammar more easier than listening and speaking. The most difficult thing about English is speaking. I'd like to go to school to learn to speak English more fluent.



Guidelines and answers

I. How to build your vocabulary

Prefixes: The prefixes attached to many **adjectives** to give them an opposite meaning depend on the first letter of the adjective. So, in many cases: adjectives beginning with **m** or **p** take the prefix **im-**; adjectives beginning with the letter **I** take the prefix **il-**; some adjectives beginning with the letter **r** take the prefix **ir-**.

Un and **in**: These can be quite confusing. However, as a general rule, longer adjectives (which come from Latin) take **in-** and shorter adjectives take **un-**.

Suffixes have very specific meanings:

-able is added to the end of **verbs** to make adjectives which show that something **can be done**, e.g. a book can be very readable, or a song singable.

-ish is added to short adjectives to show that something has some of the properties of the adjective, e.g. someone who is 19 years old can be described as **twentyish**, or **youngish**.

-y is added to nouns to make adjectives: tea with **milk** is **milky** tea; if you can do a task with **ease** it is **easy**.

Learning task answers

1. a) illegible b) impassable c) irreplaceable d) inconvenient e) unknown
2. a) rainy b) spicy c) newish d) cloudy

2. How to make useful phrases

Do your homework, an examination, the housework, some exercise, the washing up, the cleaning

'Do' often goes with tasks which are considered boring or which are done every day.

Have an examination, dinner, a walk, some exercise, some tea, a bath, a test
'Have' often goes with things which are given to us, or which we take because they we enjoy them.

Make dinner, your bed, a mess, trouble, some tea, a decision
'Make' is often used for things we create (e.g. dinner) or things which involve mental effort (e.g. a decision).

Adjectives and nouns

All of the adjectives in this passage refer to food when it has gone bad – or, with dairy food, 'gone off'. However, we cannot speak about rotten bread or sour eggs. Each adjective can be used with only a restricted range of food:

Rotten: eggs, fish

Stale: bread, biscuits

Sour: milk, cream

When learning new adjectives, take care to learn which nouns they go with.

Learning task answers

1. a) made b) done c) have d) do
2. a) heavy b) light c) thick d) heavy e) thick

3. How to use past tenses correctly

Identifying tenses

Past continuous: a, i

Past simple: b, e, f, g, h, j

Past perfect simple: d

Past perfect continuous: c

Which tense(s)?

Usually, the tenses are used to order information in a narrative in order of importance.

- a) The **past simple tense** is used most frequently. It gives us the most important events in the story and moves the story forward.
- b) The **past continuous tense** gives us background details. It describes what was happening around the time of the events in the story.
- c) The **past perfect simple** and **past perfect continuous** both give information about things which happened before the main events of the story started.

Learning task answers

- c), i), e), b), l), h), k), f), n), m), j), d), a), o)

4. How to use future forms correctly

Present continuous: meeting an old friend / going to a new art exhibition. These events have been arranged by the speaker and involve another person. Often when we talk about **future arrangements** we use this tense.

be + going to + infinitive: I'm going to have a good weekend / going to finish reading my book / going to listen to BBC World Service.
These are plans which the speaker has made for the weekend. Often when we talk about **plans made before the moment of speaking**.

might + infinitive: I might go to the cinema ...

When you haven't decided what to do before you begin to speak, it is usual to use 'might'. This shows that we are **undecided**.

Learning task answers

1. What **are you doing / are you going to do** this evening?
I don't know. I **might** go to the cinema.
2. What time **are you leaving** for the airport this evening?
About six o'clock. I'm **meeting** Jim there at 7.00.
3. I'm **going to make** dinner soon. What would you like to eat?
4. **Are you going to listen** to the radio this evening?
5. Anna **is coming** for dinner tomorrow so I'm **going to cook** something special.

5. How to choose the correct preposition

Time phrases

Use **in** with months, years, decades, centuries, seasons – and parts of the day (except for night).

Use **at** with times, and special times of the year. Also use **at** with 'night'.

Use **on** with days and dates.

'Time' words such as next, last and ago, and words which fix a day in time (e.g. yesterday, tomorrow) **do not take a preposition**.

Dependent prepositions

- a) depend **on**, also rely **on**. Often verbs with similar or related meanings take the same preposition.
- b) interested **in**
- c) hear **about**. Also speak **about** (discuss). Remember that some words can take more than one preposition depending on the meaning you want to convey.
- d) listen **to**
- e) concentrate **on**. Also focus **on**.

Learning task answers

- a) New Year's Day is **on** January 1st.
- b) The weather is hottest **in** summer.
- c) People in Britain decorate trees **at** Christmas.
- d) Shakespeare lived **in** the sixteenth century.
- e) I last listened **on** ... **at**
- f) It's **on** ... **at**

6. How to use phrasal verbs

Identifying phrasal verbs: To **look up something** means to search for information about it, usually in a book (for example, a dictionary or an encyclopaedia). In the other sentences, the word **up** shows us the direction in which people looked.

Working out the meaning: Usually, to find the meaning of a phrasal verb we can try to substitute a more formal, longer verb with the same meaning. My alarm clock **rang suddenly and loudly** at five o'clock. I **arose** and **dressed**. After a quick breakfast, I **began my journey** to work. It was going to be a long day!

By using phrasal verbs instead of more formal verbs or phrases, we make the passage sound more conversational. The tone of the passage suits the topic.

Learning task answers

1. When I'm listening to the radio, I listen
c) out for new words and expressions.

2. I also pick
d) up new words from listening to music.

3. Every evening, I go
b) over the vocabulary and grammar I've learnt.

4. When I've learnt a new word I try
a) it out in conversation.

5. I always try to work
f) out the meaning of a word from the context.

6. I'm really getting
e) on well in English.

Now match the phrasal verbs above with the more formal verbs or phrases which mean the same (below).

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) | pay attention | to listen out (for) new words |
| b) | review | to go over new vocabulary |
| c) | learn without studying | to pick up new words |
| d) | deduce | to work out the meaning |
| e) | experiment with | to try out the word |
| f) | make progress | to get on with English |

7. How to compare and contrast things

More or less?

Reading is easier than speaking English. Often you will not find the word 'than' in the sentence. In this example, speaking is mentioned first in the passage. The comparison with reading comes later. Because we already know about 'speaking' we do not need to mention it again.

Studying early in the day is more effective than in the evening. When we make comparisons we can use 'more' and also 'less'. So, studying in the evening is **less effective** and studying early in the day is **more effective**.

I could be more efficient than I am now. Again, we do not have the word 'than' in this comparison. Here, we understand that the speaker is making a comparison without mentioning 'than I am' from the rest of the conversation. We often find comparisons being made with ideas which both speaker and listener **understand** but do not say.

More or less?

a) ... add -er (e.g. taller)

b) ... add more + adj (e.g. more efficient)

c) ... add less + adj

d) Where the adjective ends in **-y**, the **-y** always turns to **-i + -er** (e.g. prettier, lovelier). Often these adjectives can take either **more + adj** or **adj + -er**.

Not as ... as ...

a) reading is easier

b) vocabulary and grammar are the same: Both are difficult!

Using **as + adj + as** shows that the two items being compared have the same level. In this case, they have the same level of difficulty.

Another way of saying 'speaking **is not as easy as** reading' is 'speaking **is less easy than** reading'.

Learning task answers

1. In winter, London is colder **than** Paris.

2. I don't speak English as well **as** I write it.

3. Learning English alone is interesting but learning English by radio is **better**.

4. It is better to listen to the radio in the evenings. The signal is clearer then.

5. Studying grammar is less difficult than learning vocabulary.

6. I'd like to visit Britain, but it is expensive to travel there.

7. This exercise isn't **as** difficult as it seemed at the beginning.

8. My family enjoys listening to BBC World Service. It's **more fun** than our local radio stations.

• Fun (which means enjoyable) is an irregular adjective.

The comparative is * **more fun**.

• Funny (which means amusing) has the comparative form 'funnier'. Two-syllable adjectives which end in **-y** usually take an **-er** ending in the comparative, e.g. pretty / prettier, easy / easier

8. How to correct your own errors

1. My friend Jane is flying to Madrid **on** Saturday. (See time prepositions)

2. She might **visit** the Prado art gallery when she is there. (See future forms)

3. She is interested **in** Spanish art and culture. (See dependent prepositions)

4. She also loves the weather there – there is no **heavy** rain! (See collocations)

5. She **went** to France last year. (See past tenses)

6. She didn't like the owners of her hotel there – they were very **impolite**! (See prefixes)

7. Next year, she **is going** to South America! (See future forms)

Learning task answers

I find studying English very **enjoyable**. At first, when I **began** to learn, I **made** many mistakes and I was scared **of** speaking / **to** speak in English. Now, however, it's a lot of fun. I listen **to** the radio every day and I **make** a note of some of the new words which I hear. Then I look them **up** in my dictionary, and try to use them the next day. In general, I find reading and grammar **easier** than listening and speaking. The most difficult thing about English is speaking. I'd like to go to school to learn to speak English more **fluently**.